

Philip Larkin A Writers Life

Renowned critic, bestselling author and award-winning poet Clive James offers an exploration and celebration of one of his favourite writers, Philip Larkin.

Martin Amis's life could itself provide the formula for an enthralling work of fiction. Son of one of the most popular and best-loved novelists of the post-War era, he has forged a groundbreaking manner of writing that owes nothing to the style of his father, nor indeed to anyone else. He relished and recorded the bizarre, turbulent atmosphere of Britain and the US during the 1970s and 80s, arguably the transformative period of the late 20th century. No other contemporary writer has proved so magnetic for the popular press: he has, despite himself, achieved celebrity status. Of late, his reputation as a novelist has been matched by his outspoken, challenging writing on contemporary global politics, and he has earned the status as the Orwell of the early 21st century. Martin Amis offers the real Martin Amis, a cabinet of contrasts: tortured, eloquently aloof, kind, obsessive, loved by women, a dedicated family man, often the architect of his own undoing, and a literary genius. Moreover, this fascinating biography discloses the autobiographical thread that runs through Amis's books. Richard Bradford has talked with Amis at length, questioned him on his childhood, his private history, his opinions and the inspiration for his fiction, and these exchanges are supplemented by interviews with a large number of his friends and fellow writers. Praise for Richard Bradford's previous titles: Praise for Lucky Him: The Life of Kingsley Amis: 'Nearly all critical biographies relate the work to the life - insidiously, tendentiously, helplessly. Richard Bradford is different: he does it convincingly, and with vigour. The result is an original and stimulating book'. Martin Amis 'I found Bradford's approach refreshing. Rare among literary academics he writes clearly, doesn't show off and knows a lot about his subject. He presents a fascinating chronicle of the development of Amis's brilliant ear for speech... He also brings out the full extent of the symbiosis between Amis and his best friend Philip Larkin: in a way Larkin invented Amis.' Craig Brown 'At his better moments Bradford... rises to Amis's stylistic level.' Humphrey Carpenter

The North Ship, Philip Larkin's earliest volume of verse, was first published in August 1945. The introduction, by Larkin himself, explains the circumstances of its publication and the influences which shaped its contents.

The appearance of Philip Larkin's second prose collection - reviews and critical assessments of writers and writing; pieces on jazz, mostly uncollected; some long, revealing and often highly entertaining interviews given on various occasions - was a considerable literary event. Stamped by wit, originality and intelligence, it was vintage Larkin throughout: 'Deprivation is for me what daffodils were for Wordsworth.' 'I see life more as an affair of solitude diversified by company than as an affair of company diversified by solitude.' Q. 'How did you arrive upon the image of a toad for work or labour?' A. 'Sheer genius.'

Philip Larkin was a keen amateur photographer and through his life he made images of the people, places and things that meant most to him. Publishing ahead of the thirtieth anniversary of the poet's death in December 2015, The Importance of Elsewhere gathers the best of Larkin's photographic work, divided into short thematic chapters arranged in chronological order. Written by Richard Bradford, the acclaimed author of the Larkin biography First Boredom, Then Fear, the book shows how Larkin, as an individual, as a writer and indeed as a photographer, developed an acute sensitivity to all aspects of the world around him, from his love of open uninhabited landscapes and empty churches to his mixed feelings about crowds. There are also fascinating portraits of those people who were closest to Larkin, including his lovers, his mother and his literary peers. Authorised by the Larkin Estate, the book beautifully reproduces around 150 images from over 1,500 held by the Larkin archive at Hull: the great majority have never previously been seen in print. A substantial foreword by Mark Haworth-Booth, formerly curator of photography at the V&A and a poet in his own right, explores what it meant to be a serious amateur photographer of Larkin's generation. Larkin was a talented photographer and the archive is effectively his illustrated life. Together with Larkin's literary works and his letters, these images make up the third, so far unseen, constituent of the material upon which our future perceptions of him will be based.

Philip Larkin: A Writer's Life won the Whitbread Award for Biography in 1993 and was championed as 'an exemplary biography of its kind' (The Times). With a new introduction written by the author, this edition offers an engrossing portrait of one of the twentieth century's most popular, and most private, poets. 'There will be other lives of Larkin, but Motion's, like Forster's of Dickens, will always have a special place.' John Carey, Sunday Times 'Larkin lived a quietly noble and exemplary version of the writer's life; Motion - affectionate but undeceived about the man's frailties, a diligent researcher and a deft reader of poetry - has written an equally exemplary 'Life' of him.' Peter Conrad, Observer 'Honest but not prurient, critical but also compassionate, Motion's book could not be bettered.' Alan Bennett, London Review of Books

Philip Larkin's poems brought him fame: he became an English institution in his own lifetime. However, since his death in 1985, and the subsequent publication of his letters, controversy has raged around his character and life. Part I of this essential introduction to Larkin's work: - takes a fresh look at the poems - leads the reader into close analysis of many of Larkin's masterful lyrics, demonstrating how to approach these enigmatic works - features chapters on the variety of voices in the poems, on social dilemmas and rituals, Larkin's depiction of society, and the poet's role - builds familiarity with Larkin's technique and the major concerns around which his poetry revolves - contains suggestions for further study at the end of each chapter. Part II provides the key background information students of Larkin need, including: - an account of the poet's life - discussion of his place in a cultural context, stretching from Modernism, through the postwar 'Movement' years and into the 1980s - historical background, from the rise of fascism in the 1930s to the height of the Cold War - a sample of major critical views of Larkin's work - suggestions for further reading. Providing students with the critical and analytical skills with which to approach the poems, this stimulating book helps readers to enjoy and explore Larkin's work, and to develop their own opinions with confidence.

Sharp and moving reflections and ruminations on the artistry and craft of writing from one of our most iconoclastic, riveting, and celebrated masters. Charles Bukowski's stories, poems, and novels have left an enduring mark on our culture. In this collection of correspondence—letters to publishers, editors, friends, and fellow writers—the writer shares his insights on the art of creation. On Writing reveals an artist brutally frank about the drudgery of work and canny and uncompromising about the absurdities of life—and of art. It illuminates the hard-edged, complex humanity of a true American legend and counterculture icon—the “laureate of American lowlife” (Time)—who stoically recorded society's downtrodden and depraved. It exposes an artist grounded in the visceral, whose work reverberates with his central ideal: “Don't try.” Piercing, poignant, and often hilarious, On Writing is filled not only with memorable lines but also with Bukowski's trademark toughness, leavened with moments of grace, pathos, and intimacy.

Philip Larkin (1992-1985) Is Today Acclaimed As A British National Cultural Icon. Historically A Movementeer, Larkin Followed The Pleasure Principle To Democratize Poetry By Forging A Distinctive Philistine Aesthetic, By Employing A Defiantly Demotic Diction, And By Building His Poems Around A Structure Of Rational Discourse. Philip Larkin : Poetry That Builds Bridges Is A Well-Researched And Immensely Readable Book. It Is Perhaps The Only Work Available Today That Offers A Comprehensive Critical Account Of The Full Range Of Larkin S Poetry. A Significant Contribution To Larkin Studies, This Book Provides A Between-The-Lines Analysis Of Almost All The Poems Embodied In The Four Major Collections Of Larkin The North Ship, The Less Deceived, The Whitsun Weddings And High Windows. By Exploiting The Resources Of Larkin S Letters, His Prose Writings And His Biography, The Author Traces, Much Against The Grain Of Contemporary Larkin Criticism, The Poet S Thematic,

Attitudinal And Technical Development From One Book Of His Poetry To The Next, And Shows The Trend Of Larkin S Evolution. With A Holistic Approach To The Total Corpus Of Larkin S Poetry, The Author Perspectivises The Poet, And Argues The Larkin S Achievements Lie In His Success In Building Bridges Between Aestheticism And Philistinism, Between Empiricism And Transcendentalism, Between Classicism And Romanticism, Between Modernism And Postmodernism, Between The Native British Poetic Tradition And The Anglo-Franco-American Experimental Line, And, Above All, Between Poetry And The Reading Public. This Book Also Contends The Larkin S Vision Of Life Is Neither Pessimistic Nor Optimistic, But Tragic And Melioristic.

For the first time, Faber publish a selection from the poetry of Philip Larkin. Drawing on Larkin's four collections and on his uncollected poems. Chosen by Martin Amis. 'Many poets make us smile; how many poets make us laugh - or, in that curious phrase, "laugh out loud" (as if there's another way of doing it)? Who else uses an essentially conversational idiom to achieve such a variety of emotional effects? Who else takes us, and takes us so often, from sunlit levity to mellifluous gloom?... Larkin, often, is more than memorable: he is instantly unforgettable.' - Martin Amis

About his poetry, Motion has observed: "I want my writing to be as clear as water. No ornate language; very few obvious tricks. I want readers to be able to see all the way down through its surfaces into the swamp. I want them to feel they're in a world they thought they knew, but which turns out to be stranger, more charged, more disturbed than they realised. In truth, creating this world is a more theatrical operation than the writing admits, and it's this discretion about strong feeling, and strong feeling itself, which keeps drawing me back to the writers I most admire: Wordsworth, Edward Thomas, Philip Larkin." Indeed, a significant and consistent feature of Motion's work, throughout his shifts in style and changes in imaginative topographies, is his signature clarity of observation, his unwillingness to sacrifice intelligibility or embrace opacity. Instead, Motion employs the full power of the English language to do his bidding, and, in love with words as he is, the words cooperate, communicate--transforming the intangible, the abstract into intelligible images, associations, and ultimately, knowledge. In his role as poet laureate for the past ten years, Motion has worked to make poetry more widely available to the general public free of charge (through his online archiving of poets reading their work at The Poetry Archive) and has tried to demystify verse, saying simply, "The best poems are those which speak to us about the important things in our lives in a way that we never forget. Any heavier definition than that begins to collapse under its own weight and exclude many forms of poetry." Motion's own lyrical poems, many written in formal meter and rhyme, speak to us clearly and memorably, meeting his own challenge with flying colors.

Kingsley Amis was a mimic, jester, father, husband, atheist, pseudo-socialist and clubland Tory boozier with a limitless taste for adultery; Philip Larkin a glum misanthrope who lived in self-imposed solitude. And yet, after meeting at St John's, Oxford in 1941, this unlikely pair struck up a friendship to endure for more than forty years, despite a period of acrimony in the 1960s. From their early days of undergraduate ambitions and enthusiasms through to the bitterness of middle age, Richard Bradford charts the progress of a remarkable friendship, and shows how crucial it was to the making of these two literary giants. Without Larkin's inspiration and input, Amis would never have written his award-winning debut, *Lucky Jim*; if not for Amis's overnight success, Larkin would never have abandoned his hopes of becoming a novelist and turned instead to verse. Larkin's ensuing resentment would simmer beneath the surface of their relationship for years to come. Drawing on an enormous archive of letters, manuscripts and interviews, *The Odd Couple* not only offers a rare glimpse into the private correspondence of two controversial and eccentric men, it also illuminates some of the finest novels and poems of the twentieth century.

Seven hundred of the great poet's letters are collected here offering a moving, instructive portrait of Larkin, from his early correspondence with school friends to his last year of life, 1985, when he died at the age of sixty-three.

Philip Larkin's *Required Writing*, a selection from his miscellaneous prose from 1953-82, was highly praised and enjoyed when it appeared in 1983. *Further Requirements* gathers together many other interviews, broadcasts, statements and reviews. Some of them date from the period after he had chosen the contents of *Required Writing*; others come from obscure publications, including some early pieces. This second edition of *Further Requirements* includes two more essays by Larkin: 'Operation Manuscript' and his Introduction to *Earth Memories* by Llewelyn Powys.

Beginning in the late 1930s, this is the first book-length critical study of Larkin's early work: his poetry, novels, short fictions, essays, and letters. The book tells the story of Philip Larkin's early literary development, starting with Larkin's earliest literary efforts and his remarkable correspondence with Jim Sutton, and ending at the point Larkin's maturity begins, with the writing of his first great poems. In providing a comprehensive and systematic study of this part of Larkin's life, this book also presents a new and surprising narrative of Larkin's development. Critics have presented Larkin's early career as a false start which he overcame by swapping Yeats's influence for Hardy's. Having re-discovered Hardy's poetry in 1946, the story goes, Larkin realised the potential of writing about his own life, and disavowed Yeats. Central to this book's controversial counter-narrative is an insistence on the significance of Brunette Coleman, the female heteronym Larkin invented in 1943. Three years before his re-discovery of Hardy, Larkin wrote a strange and unique series of works for schoolgirls under Coleman's name. These writings not only led him away from Yeats and other hindering influences, but also away from himself. Whereas the Yeats-to-Hardy narrative emphasises the autobiographical qualities of Larkin's mature verse, *Early Larkin* proposes that the writer's breakthrough was a result of his burgeoning 'interest in everything outside himself' – itself the consequence of his curious experiment with Brunette Coleman.

The first-ever collection of essays by one of our most distinguished and distinctive poets, Pulitzer Prize-winner and former Poet Laureate of the United States, Kay Ryan *Synthesizing Gravity* gathers for the first time a thirty-year selection of Kay Ryan's probings into aesthetics, poetics, and the mind in pursuit of art. A bracing collection of critical prose, book reviews, and her private previously unpublished soundings of poems and poets— including Robert Frost, Stevie Smith, Marianne Moore, William Bronk, and Emily Dickinson— *Synthesizing Gravity* bristles with Ryan's crisp wit, her keen off-kilter insights, and her appetite and appreciation for the genuine. Among essays like "Radiantly Indefensible," "Notes on the Danger of Notebooks," and "The Abrasion of Loneliness," are piquant pieces on the virtues of emptiness, forgetfulness and other under-loved concepts. Edited and with an introduction by Christian Wiman, this generous collection of Ryan's distinctive thinking gives us a surprising look into the mind of an American master.

A stunning new edition that brings together all of Larkin's poems in addition to some unpublished pieces.

An authoritative review of literary biography covering the seventeenth century to the twentieth century *A Companion to Literary Biography* offers a comprehensive account of literary biography spanning the history of the genre across three centuries. The editor – an esteemed literary biographer and noted expert in the field – has encouraged contributors to explore the theoretical and methodological questions raised by the writing of biographies of writers. The text examines how biographers have dealt with the lives of classic authors from Chaucer to contemporary figures such as Kingsley Amis. *The Companion* brings a new perspective on how literary biography enables the reader to deal with the relationship between the writer and their work. Literary biography is the most popular form of writing about writing, yet it has been largely neglected in the academic community. This volume bridges the gap between literary biography as a popular genre and its relevance for the academic study of literature. This important work: Allows the author of a biography to be treated as part of the process of interpretation and investigates biographical reading as an important aspect of criticism Examines the birth of literary biography at the close of the seventeenth century and considers its expansion through the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries Addresses the status and writing of literary biography from numerous perspectives

and with regard to various sources, methodologies and theories Reviews the ways in which literary biography has played a role in our perception of writers in the mainstream of the English canon from Chaucer to the present day Written for students at the undergraduate level, through postgraduate and doctoral levels, as well as academics, *A Companion to Literary Biography* illustrates and accounts for the importance of the literary biography as a vital element of criticism and as an index to our perception of literary history.

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From one of the most highly acclaimed writers at work today: his most intimate and epic work yet—an autobiographical novel of sex and love, family and friendship. “The Mick Jagger of literature ... Amis is the most dazzling prose stylist in post-war British fiction.” —Mick Brown, *The Daily Telegraph* “[A] charismatic compound of fact and fiction ... Martin Amis has retained the power to surprise.” —Parul Sehgal, *The New York Times* This novel had its birth in the death of Martin Amis's closest friend, the incomparable Christopher Hitchens, and it is within that profound and sprawling friendship that *Inside Story* unfurls.

From their early days as young magazine staffers in London, reviewing romantic entanglements and the latest literary gossip (not to mention ideas, books, and where to lunch), Hitch was Amis's wingman and adviser, especially in the matter of the alluringly amoral Phoebe Phelps—an obsession Amis must somehow put behind him if he is ever to find love, marriage, a plausible run at happiness. Other figures competing as Amis's main influencers are his literary fathers—Kingsley, of course; his hero Saul Bellow; the weirdly self-financing poet Philip Larkin—and his significant literary mothers, including Iris Murdoch and Elizabeth Jane Howard. Moving among these greats to set his own path, Amis's quest is a tender, witty exploration of the hardest questions: how to live, how to grieve, and how to die. In search of his answers, he surveys the horrors of the twentieth century, and the still-unfolding impact of the 9/11 attacks on the twenty-first--and considers what all of this has taught him about how to be a writer. The result is a love letter to life—and to the people in his life—that achieves a new level of confidentiality with his readers, giving us the previously unseen portrait of his extraordinary world.

Andrew Motion's dramatic narration of Keats's life is the first in a generation to take a fresh look at this great English Romantic poet. Unlike previous biographers, Motion pays close attention to the social and political worlds Keats inhabited. Making incisive use of the poet's inimitable letters, Motion presents a masterful account. "Motion has given us a new Keats, one who is skinned alive, a genius who wrote in a single month all the poems we cherish, a victim who was tormented by the best doctors of the age. . . . This portrait, stripped of its layers of varnish and restored to glowing colours, should last us for another generation."—Edmund White, *The Observer Review* "Keats's letters fairly leap off the page. . . . [Motion] listens for the 'freely associating inquiry and incomparable verve and dash,' the 'headlong charge,' of Keats's jazzlike improvisations, which give us, like no other writing in English, the actual rush of a man thinking, a mind hurtling forward unpredictably and sweeping us along."—Morris Dickstein, *New York Times Book Review* "Scrupulous and eloquent."—Gregory Feeley, *Philadelphia Inquirer*

Philip Larkin met Monica Jones at University College Leicester in autumn 1946, when they were both 24; he was the newly-appointed assistant librarian and she was an English lecturer. This title consists of nearly 2000 letters, postcards and telegrams, which chronicle various aspects of Larkin's life and the convolutions of their relationship.

Rebecca Elson's *A Responsibility to Awe* reissued as a Carcanet Classic. *A Responsibility to Awe* is a contemporary classic, a book of poems and reflections by a scientist for whom poetry was a necessary aspect of research, crucial to understanding the world and her place in it, even as, having contracted terminal cancer, she confronted her early death. Rebecca Elson was an astronomer; her work took her to the boundary of the visible and measurable. 'Facts are only as interesting as the possibilities they open up to the imagination,' she wrote. Her poems, like her researches, build imaginative inferences and speculations, setting out from observation, undeterred by knowing how little we can know.

Philip Larkin's second collection, *The Less Deceived* was published by The Marvell Press in 1955, and now appears for the first time in Faber covers. The eye can hardly pick them out From the cold shade they shelter in, Till wind distresses tail and mane; Then one crops grass, and moves about - The other seeming to look on - And stands anonymous again. from 'At Grass'

A revelatory, intimate, and sympathetic study of Philip Larkin, an iconic poet and a much misunderstood man, offering fresh understanding of the interplay of his life and work. Philip Larkin (1922-1985) is one of the most beloved poets in English. Yet after his death a largely negative image of the man himself took hold; he has been portrayed as a racist, a misogynist and a narcissist. Now Larkin scholar James Booth, for seventeen years a colleague of the poet's at the University of Hull, offers a very different portrait. Drawn from years of research and a wide variety of Larkin's friends and correspondents, this is the most comprehensive portrait of the poet yet published. Booth traces the events that shaped Larkin in his formative years, from his early life when his his political instincts were neutralised by exposure to his father's controversial Nazi values. He studies how the academic environment and the competition he felt with colleagues such as Kingsley Amis informed not only Larkin's poetry, but also his little-known ambitions as a novelist. Through the places and people Larkin encountered over the course of his life, including Monica Jones, with whom he had a tumultuous but enduring relationship, Booth pieces together an image of a rather reserved and gentle man, whose personality-and poetry--have been misinterpreted by decades of academic study. *Philip Larkin: Life, Art and Love* reveals the man behind the words as he has never been seen before.

Philip LarkinPhilip LarkinA Writer's Life

The book offers a detailed commentary on the poetry of Philip Larkin, exploring the political and cultural contexts which have shaped his contemporary reputation. Part 1, *Life and Times*, traces Larkin's early years and follows his development, within his career as a university librarian, into one of the most important and popular voices in twentieth-century poetry. Part 2, *Artistic Strategies*, explores a range of methodologies and aesthetic influences by which Larkin was able to create poetry at once both accessible and profound. Part 3, *Reading Larkin*, provides detailed critical commentary on many of the poems from his three major collections, *The Less Deceived*, *The Whitsun Weddings* and *High Windows*. Part 4, *Reception*, outlines the history of Larkin's reputation from the mid-1950s to the present, examining the debates and ideological confrontations to which his poetry has given rise.

"I don't want you to rehabilitate me," Philip Roth said to his only authorized biographer, Blake Bailey. "Just make me interesting." Granted complete independence and access, Bailey spent almost ten years poring over Roth's personal archive, interviewing his friends, lovers, and colleagues, and listening to Roth's own breathtakingly candid confessions. Cynthia Ozick, in her front-page rave for the *New York Times Book Review*, described Bailey's monumental biography as "a narrative masterwork ... As in a novel, what is seen at first to be casual chance is revealed at last to be a steady and powerfully demanding drive. ... under Bailey's strong light what remains on the page is one writer's life as it was lived, and?almost?as it was felt." Though Roth is generally considered an autobiographical novelist—his alter-egos include not only the Roth-like writer Nathan Zuckerman, but also a recurring character named Philip Roth—relatively little is known about the actual life on which so vast an oeuvre was supposedly

based. Bailey reveals a man who, by design, led a highly compartmentalized life: a tireless champion of dissident writers behind the Iron Curtain on the one hand, Roth was also the Mickey Sabbath-like roué who pursued scandalous love affairs and aspired “[t]o affront and affront and affront till there was no one on earth unaffronted”—the man who was pilloried by his second wife, the actress Claire Bloom, in her 1996 memoir, *Leaving a Doll’s House*. Towering above it all was Roth’s achievement: thirty-one books that give us “the truest picture we have of the way we live now,” as the poet Mark Strand put it in his remarks for Roth’s Gold Medal at the 2001 American Academy of Arts and Letters ceremonial. Tracing Roth’s path from realism to farce to metafiction to the tragic masterpieces of the American Trilogy, Bailey explores Roth’s engagement with nearly every aspect of postwar American culture.

Maeve Brennan had a close friendship with Philip Larkin, as well as working with him for a number of years. In this book, she provides new insight into the poet’s complex personality, overturning the perceived image of him as a misanthrope.

A portrait of the influential 20th-century poet challenges negative portrayals of his character, drawing on insider access to discuss his formative years, political beliefs, academic rivalries and career-shaping relationships.

Ian McEwan, Margaret Drabble, Martin Amis, Rita Dove, Andrew Motion and Anthony Thwaite are among the twenty-two distinguished contributors of original essays to this landmark volume on the profound and frequently perplexing bond between writer and mother. In compelling detail they bring to life the thoughts, work, loves, friendships, passions and, above all, the influence of mothers upon their literary offspring from Shakespeare to the present. Many of the contributors evoke the ideal with fond and loving memories: understanding, selfless, spiritual, tender, protective, reassuring and self-assured mothers who created environments favorable to the development of their children’s gifts. At the opposite end of the parenting spectrum, however, we also see tortured mothers who ignored, interfered with, smothered or abandoned their children. Their early years were times of traumatic loss, unhappily dominated by death and human frailty. Elegantly assembled and presented, *Writers and Their Mothers* will appeal to everyone interested in biography, literature, and creativity in general.

Is there anything that Martin Amis can’t write about? In this virtuosic, career-spanning collection he takes on James Joyce and Elvis Presley, Nabokov and English football, Jane Austen and Penthouse Forum, William Burroughs and Hillary Clinton. But above all, Amis is concerned with literature, and with the deadly clichés—not only of the pen, but of the mind and the heart. In *The War Against Cliché*, Amis serves up fresh assessments of the classics and plucks neglected masterpieces off their dusty shelves. He tilts with Cervantes, Dickens and Milton, celebrates Bellow, Updike and Elmore Leonard, and deflates some of the most bloated reputations of the past three decades. On every page Amis writes with jaw-dropping felicity, wit, and a subversive brilliance that sheds new light on everything he touches. The inner workings of a writer’s life, the interplay between experience and writing, are brilliantly recounted by a master of the art. Gay Talese now focuses on his own life—the zeal for the truth, the narrative edge, the sometimes startling precision, that won accolades for his journalism and best-sellerdom and acclaim for his revelatory books about *The New York Times* (*The Kingdom and the Power*), the Mafia (*Honor Thy Father*), the sex industry (*Thy Neighbor’s Wife*), and, focusing on his own family, the American immigrant experience (*Unto the Sons*). How has Talese found his subjects? What has stimulated, blocked, or inspired his writing? Here are his amateur beginnings on his college newspaper; his professional climb at *The New York Times*; his desire to write on a larger canvas, which led him to magazine writing at *Esquire* and then to books. We see his involvement with issues of race from his student days in the Deep South to a recent interracial wedding in Selma, Alabama, where he once covered the fierce struggle for civil rights. Here are his reflections on the changing American sexual mores he has written about over the last fifty years, and a striking look at the lives—and their meaning—of Lorena and John Bobbitt. He takes us behind the scenes of his legendary profile of Frank Sinatra, his writings about Joe DiMaggio and heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson, and his interview with the head of a Mafia family. But he is at his most poignant in talking about the ordinary men and women whose stories led to his most memorable work. In remarkable fashion, he traces the history of a single restaurant location in New York, creating an ethnic mosaic of one restaurateur after the other whose dreams were dashed while a successor’s were born. And as he delves into the life of a young female Chinese soccer player, we see his consuming interest in the world in its latest manifestation. In these and other recollections and stories, Talese gives us a fascinating picture of both the serendipity and meticulousness involved in getting a story. He makes clear that every one of us represents a good one, if a writer has the curiosity to know it, the diligence to pursue it, and the desire to get it right. Candid, humorous, deeply impassioned—a dazzling book about the nature of writing in one man’s life, and of writing itself.

Letters Home gives access to the last major archive of Larkin’s writing to remain unpublished: the letters to members of his family. These correspondences help tell the story of how Larkin came to be the writer and the man he was: to his father Sydney, a ‘conservative anarchist’ and admirer of Hitler, who died relatively early in Larkin’s life; to his timid depressive mother Eva, who by contrast, lived long, and whose final years were shadowed by dementia; and to his sister Kitty, the sparse surviving fragment of whose correspondence with her brother gives an enigmatic glimpse of a complex and intimate relationship. But it was the years during which he and his sister looked after their mother in particular that shaped the writer we know so well: a number of poems written over this time are for her, and the mood of pain, shadow and despondency that characterises his later verse draws its strength from his experience of the long, lonely years of her senility. One surprising element in the volume, however, is the joie de vivre shown in the large number of witty and engaging drawings of himself and Eva, as ‘Young Creature’ and ‘Old Creature’, with which he enlivens his letters throughout the three decades of her widowhood. This important edition, meticulously edited by Larkin’s biographer, James Booth, is a key piece of scholarship that completes the portrait of this most cherished of English poets.

Philip Larkin is one of the finest English poets of our time. His poetic personality - nostalgic, wry, melancholy, ironic, witty and haunting - has appealed to a far wider audience than that of literary specialists, while also winning the respect of leading critics and fellow poets. Lerner’s study relates poetry to Larkin’s life, and to the literary and social environment of post-war Britain; discusses the Larkin persona, and Larkin’s relation to literary criticism; and above all seeks to guide readers to a full appreciation of the power and subtlety of Larkin’s best poems.

Drawing on the papers deposited after his death in the Brynmor Jones Library, Hull, this volume collects together virtually all of Philip Larkin’s remaining unpublished fiction.

Philip Larkin met Monica Jones at University College Leicester in autumn 1946, when they were both twenty-four; he was the newly-appointed assistant librarian and she was an English lecturer. In 1950 Larkin moved to Belfast, and thence to Hull, while Monica remained in Leicester, becoming by turns his correspondent, lover and closest confidante, in a relationship which lasted over forty years until the poet’s death in 1985. This remarkable unpublished correspondence only came to light after Monica Jones’s death in 2001, and consists of nearly two thousand letters, postcards and telegrams, which chronicle - day by day, sometimes hour by hour - every aspect of Larkin’s life and the convolutions of their relationship.

'A brilliant biography - John Sutherland has brought Monica Jones to life as she deserves.' Claire Tomalin 'I couldn't put it down. Vivid and penetrating, it's a brilliant portrait of a confounding, complex woman.' Cressida Connolly Monica Jones was Philip Larkin's partner for more than four decades, and was arguably the most important woman in his life. She was cruelly immortalised as Margaret Peel in Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim and widely vilified for destroying Larkin's diaries and works in progress after his death. She was opinionated and outspoken, widely disliked by his friends and Philip himself was routinely unfaithful to her. But Monica Jones was also a brilliant academic and an inspiring teacher in her own right. She wrote more than 2,000 letters to Larkin, and he in turn poured out his heart to her. In this revealing biography John Sutherland explores the question: who was the real Monica? The calm and collected friend and teacher? The witty conversationalist and inspirational lecturer? Or the private Monica, writing desperate, sometimes furious, occasionally libellous, drunken letters to the only man, to the absent man, whom she could love? Was Monica's life - one of total sacrifice to a great poet - worthwhile? Through his careful reading of Monica's never-before-seen letters, and his own recollections, John Sutherland shows us a new side to Larkin's story, and allows Monica to finally step out from behind the poet's shadow.

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